

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 HA-05 SSM-03 /100 W
-----129956 121730Z /43

R 121659Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4172
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 01280

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, EG, DJ, ET, SO
SUBJECT: COMMENTS BY MFA AFRICAN DEPT DIRECTOR ON OSMAN
- MISSION TO DJIBOUTI

REFS: (A) DJIBOUTI 0022, (B) DJIBOUTI 0023

SUMMARY: EGYPTIANS BELIEVE SPECIAL DEL TO DJIBOUTI WAS
SUCCESSFUL BY HELPING TO PREVENT FURTHER INTERNAL DIS-
SENSATION. EGYPTIANS CRITICAL OF SOMALI ROLE IN RECENT
DJIBOUTI TROUBLES AND OF ISSA POLITICIANS. EGYPTIANS
MADE SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR ENDING INTERCOMMUNAL STRIFE.
GOULED MAY BE SEEKING MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM EGYPT.
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EGYPTIAN SHIP VISIT OFF PERHAPS DUE TO LARGE NEW SOVIET
RADAR FACILITY ON ETHIOPIAN/DJIBOUTI BORDER. END SUMMARY.

1. MFA AFRICAN DEPT DIRECTOR AMB AHMAD SIDQI, WHO AC-
COMPANIED UNDERSECRETARY AHMAD OSMAN ON JANUARY 3-6 VISIT
TO DJIBOUTI (REFTELS), MADE FOLLOWING COMMENTS TO EMBOFFS
JANUARY 12 CONCERNING GOE ATTITUDES TOWARD DJIBOUTI IN

WAKE OF OSMAN MISSION. IN SIDQI OPINION, OSMAN MISSION WAS A SUCCESS PRIMARILY BECAUSE, AFTER INTENSIVE LOBBYING " IN BOTH CAMPS, EGYPTIANS FELT THAT THEY HAD HELPED TO PREVENT RECENT BREACHES BETWEEN AFARS AND SOMALI ISSAS FROM WIDENING.

2. SOMALI ATTEMPTS TO INVOLVE DJIBOUTI IN OGADEN CONFLICT. PERHAAS MOST SURPRISING IN SIDQI OBSERVATION WAS HIS SAULTING SOMALIA FOR RECENT BREAKDOWN OF SECURITY IN DJIBOUTI. EGYPTIANS GAINED IMPRESSION THAT SOMALIS TRYING TO DRAG DJIBOUTI INTO OGADEN MAELSTROM (TO "INTERNATIONALIZE" IT) IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN ARAB SUPPORT FOR SOMALIA. EGYPTIAN CONCLUSION BASED ON FOLLOWING: SOMALIS BELIEVE ARAB INVOLVEMENT IN SOMALI-ETHIOPIAN DISPUTE WOULD INCREASE IF DJIBOUTI, ASTRIDE STRATEGIC BAB AL-MANDAB, WAS DIRECTLY THREATENED BY SOVIET-BACKED ETHIOPIANS. AS RESULT, SOMALIS FANNING FIRES OF ISSA IRREDENTISM, „OMISING ISSA CONTROL OVER ISSA TERRITORIES SOUTH OF DJIBOUTI TOWARD JIIGA, IN RETURN FOR ISSA SUPPORT AGAINST ETHIOPIAN FORCES AND HARD LINE AGAINST AFARS WITHIN DJIBOUTI. SOMALIS, IN EGYPTIAN VIEW, HOPING FOR ETHIOPIAN INTERVENTION IN DJIBOUTI TO STAMPEDE MODERATE ARABS. SOMALI AMBASSADOR IN DJIBOUTI WAS STRONGLY URGED TO TRANSMIT TO MOGADISCIO EGYPTIAN RECOMMENDATION THAT SOMALIA DESIST FROM THIS POLICY.

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3. ISSAS JOCKEYING FOR GOULED'S MANTEL? SIDQI THOUGHT GROUP OF HARD-LINE ISSA CONFIDANTS OF PRES GOULED PUSHING ANTI-AFAR MEASURES AS PART OF STRUGGLE FOR SUCCESSION TO GOULED. MANY CONTACTS OF OSMAN DELEGATION BELIEVED THAT GOULED AT PRESENT SERIOUSLY ILL AND WILL NOT LAST LONG AS PRESIDENT. ONE OF MOST OUTSPOKEN ANTI-AFAR LEADERS IS MININT MOUMIN BAHDON FARAH, BUT EGYPTIANS SEE CHIEF VILLAIN IN UNEDUCATED CHIEF OF STAFF. UNDERSECRETARY OSMAN DISCUSSED CHIEF OF STAFF WITH FRENCH AMB BASTOUIL, WHO OROMISED EGYPTIANS TO URGE REMOVAL OF CHIEF OF STAFF UPON GOULED, UPON PRESIDENT'S RETURN FROM GULF.

4. HOW TO MOLLIFY AFARS. SIDQI BELIEVED THAT SINE QUANON NOO EVENTUAL RESOLUTION OF CURRENT ISSA-AFAR TENSIONS WOULD BE PROMISE OF INCREASED RECRUITMENT OF AFARS FOR ARMY AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION. EGYPTIANS DID NOT THINK THAT AFARS WOULD FEEL SECURE UNTIL APPROXIMATELY 50 -ERCENT OO ARMED FORCES WERE AFARS. EGYPTIANS MADE SREQUENT TOINT TO THEIR GOVERNMENT (ISSA) INTERLOCUTORS THAT, IN NACE OF ISSA INTRANSIGENCE IN DJIBOUTI, YOUNG AFARS WOULD SIMPLY DRIFT ACROSS BORDER TO ETHIOPIA, TO BE TRAINED THERE BY ETHIOPIANN/SOVIETS/CUBANS IN GUER.

RILLA WARRARE. WHEN YOUNG AFAR GUERRILLAS RETURNED TO DJIBOUTI, SITUATION WOULD BECOME MORE EXPLOSIVE. SIDQI PERSONALLY RECOMMENDED TO MINCOMMERCE MOHAMED DJAMA ELABE THAT GROD CONTACT SPECIALIZED UN AGENCIES (ILO, FAO, ETC) TO SEE WHETHER TECHNICAL TRAINING OUTSIDE DJIBOUTI COULD BE ARRANGED FOR TALENTED YOUNG AFARS. THIS WOULD KEEP "EXCITABLE ONES" OUT OF DJIBOUTI DURING CRITICAL PERIOD. EGYPTIANS ALSO URGED GOULED TO CEASE TORTURE OF AFAR DETAINEES (SEVERAL VICTIMS APPEALED DIRECTLY TO OSMAN DELEGATION) AND TO RELEASE ALL AFARS EXCEPT PROVEN TERRORISTS.

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5. ROLE OF AHMAD DINI AND ABDALLAH KAMIL. EGYPTIANS FOUND AHMAD DINI QUITE REASONABLE AND WERE IMPRESSED BY HIS WILLINGNESS TO MEET WITH GOULED "ANY PLACE, ANY TIME". SIDQI OPINED THAT NO NEW DJIBOUTI GOVERNMENT CAN SURVIVE AT PRESENT WITHOUT PARTICIPATION OR, AT MINIMUM, OVERT BLESSING OF DINI. EGYPTIANS WERE ALSO FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY ABDALLAH KAMIL, ALTHOUGH THEY FOUND HIM PREOCCUPIED WITH ROLE OF SOLE REMAINING CONDUIT

BETWEEN AFAR COMMUNITY AND GOULED. IN PAST, SIDQI NOTED, AFARS DEALT WITH GOULED DIRECTLY, OR THROUGH DINI, BUT NOW KAMIL ONLY ACTIVE AFAR SPOKESMAN IN GROD. EGYPTIANS BELIEVE KAMIL WOULD MADE GOOD PRIME MINISTER, BUT DOUBT WHETHER PERSONAL ANIMOSITIES BETWEEN KAMIL AND DINA WOULD
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ALLOW THIS. KAMIL, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH EGYPTIANS, CRITICIZED DINI FOR ALLOWING POSITION OF PRIME MINISTER TO REMAIN POWERLESS. WITH MODICUM OF IMAGINATION AND FLEXIBILITY, OPINED KAMIL, ANY AFAR PRIME MINISTER CAN SLOWLY ACCRUE TO HIMSELF POWERS NECESSARY TO GET JOB DONE; DINI HAD BEEN TOO RIGID AND HAD FORCED UNNECESSARY CONFRONTATION.

6. PROBLEMS WITH ETHIOPIA. PRIOR TO ARRIVAL OF EGYPTIANS, RELATIONS BETWEEN GOULED AND EPMG HAD BEEN SEVERELY STRAINED DUE TO ETHIOPIAN CUT-OFF OF FOODSTUFFS TRUCKED INTO DJIBOUTI. EGYPTIANS DISCOVERED, HOWEVER, THAT PROBLEM CAUSED BY SOMALI AMB IN DJIBOUTI, WHO HAD BEEN BUYING UP ETHIOPIAN PRODUCE AND TRUCKING SUPPLIES TO TO SOMALI FORCES FIGHTING IN OGADEN, THUS INFURIATING ETHIOPIANS. MATTER WAS APPARENTLY SETTLED DURING EARLY JANUARY VISIT OF ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION LED BY ETHIOPIAN MFA AFRICAN DEPT CHIEF BERHANU DINKA, WHO AGREED TO RESUME SHIPMENTS OF ETHIOPIAN PRODUCE IN RETURN FOR PLEDGE BY GOULED THAT NOTHING WOULD BE TRANS-SHIPPED ON TO OGADEN.

7. EGYPTIAN ARMS FOR DJIBOUTI? SIDQI NOTED WITH SOME AMUSEMENT THAT, FOR SOME TIME, GOULED HAD BEEN ATTEMPTING TO OBTAIN EGYPTIAN ARMS FOR "DEFENSE" OF DJIBOUTI. GOULED ORIGINALLY ASKED FOR EGYPTIAN MILITARY DELEGATION TO VISIT DJIBOUTI, BUT GOE DECLINED IN VIEW OF FRENCH SENSIBILITIES ON MILITARY QUESTIONS. EGYPTIANS SUBSEQUENTLY PROPOSED THAT GOULED SEND MILITARY DELEGATION TO CAIRO, BUT THIS WAS NEVER ORGANIZED. FINALLY, DURING OSMAN VISIT, GOULED PROMISED TO SEND LIST OF REQUESTS TO CAIRO. EGYPTIANS REMAIN HIGHLY SKEPTICAL, BOTH BECAUSE DJIBOUTI TOTALLY INCAPABLE OF DEFENDING ITSELF AGAINST
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EITHER NEIGHBOR AND BECAUSE GOULED CLEARLY HAS NO IDEA WHAT TYPE OF EQUIPMENT HE WANTS. SIDQI BELIEVED THAT "OTHER PARTIES" (I.E., SOMALIA) HAVE PUT GOULED UP TO THIS SCHEME.

8. SHIP VISITS AND SOVIET RADAR. IN ACCORDANCE WITH REFTEL B, EMBOFF INQUIRED ABOUT POSSIBLE EGYPTIAN SHIP VISIT TO DJIBOUTI AND CLARIFIED NATURE OF U.S. SHIP VISITS TO DJIBOUTI. SIDQI APPEARED UNCONCERNED CONCERNING NATURE OF U.S. VISITS, BUT INDICATED THAT EGYPTIAN VISIT WAS PROBABLY OFF. ONE REASON FOR CANCELLATION, SIDQI SUGGESTED, WAS CONSTRUCTION BY SOVIETS OF LARGE RADAR STATION, JUST ON ETHIOPIAN SIDE OF DJIBOUTI FRONTIER, ON MOUSSALI HILLS, ON NORTH-WESTERN EDGE OF DJIBOUTI. RADAR STATION CAPABLE OF MONITORING SHIP MOVEMENTS FROM JIDDA " TO ADEN GULF AND EGYPTIANS, FOR REASONS UNEXPLAINED BY SIDQI, APPARENTLY DO NOT WISH TO PUT AN EGYPTIAN WARSHIP UNDER SOVIET SURVEILLANCE. SIDQI OPINED THAT, IN VIEW OF NEW SOVIET INSTALLATION, ANTI-SOVIET PATROLLING IN WATERS OFF DJIBOUTI SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN BY SMALLER COASTAL CRAFT, RATHER THAN WARSHIPS. EILTS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CAIRO01280
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780018-0835
Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
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Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 DJIBOUTI 22, 78 DJIBOUTI 23
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3783417
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COMMENTS BY MFA AFRICAN DEPT DIRECTOR ON OSMAN - MISSION TO DJIBOUTI
TAGS: PEPR, OVIP, EG, DJ, ET, SO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f939fce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014